

INTERVENTION ON THE EXISTING HERITAGE - WHAT SOLUTIONS FOR MOROCCAN BUILT HERITAGE

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ABSTRACT

Rabat is considered one of the richest cities in heritage in Morocco. It has an architectural and urban heritage dating from the Roman period to the (experimental) intervention of the French protectorate administration.

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of interventions on heritage fabrics in Morocco, buildings are demolished to bring new buildings to the surface, others are supported without knowing how to approach them.

Yet voices are raised denouncing an irreversible loss of a singular patrimony. As a result of not being able to prevent demolition, associations preach to preserve the facade of these buildings. Thus, a new phenomenon is beginning to emerge, especially in the colonial centre of Rabat: façadism;

It consists of a total or partial demolition of the interior of buildings, and a reconstruction of new spaces, resulting in functional, structural, volumetric and even architectural deformations due to the constraint of “paste” a new plan to an existing facade, it has often been used for the siting of office buildings at the location of former residential buildings whose appearance is retained only, dissociated from the architectural design of which it was a part, and without consideration for the original interior creation or function of the building itself and its neighbourhood.

This reflection on façadism directs us to a re-reading of the problem of intervention on the “existing” as a radical solution and to ask ourselves about the future of this new “avatar” product promoting the outer envelope of the buildings independently of the plan.

It is indeed essential to dissect the concept and practice of façadism in Morocco in order to understand its interest as an architectural practice of intervention on the existing heritage.

KEYWORDS: *Colonial Creation, Existing Heritage, Architectural Styles, Facadism, Rabat, Morocco*